

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency

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# ENH NEWS

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For Immediate Release

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SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS, SEPTEMBER 24, 1980

The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency's involvement in Cahokia's Burning Ditch (Dead Creek) was slow in developing. The Agency received initial reports from area residents in May of periodic smoldering of materials in the ditch between Queeny Avenue and Judith Lane. At that time the incident did not appear to be of a serious nature, and the Agency assigned it a low priority.

That all changed on August 27 when it was learned that Peter Laumann's dog rolled in the ditch and died of apparent chemical burns. Preliminary samples taken in the ditch revealed hazardous levels of phosphorous, heavy metals and PCB's along the half-mile of ditch between the two streets.

Subsequent soil samples taken on September 16 and 17 of soil in the ditch substantiated earlier results, (see attached table). At that time water samples were taken from three private wells plus a pond adjacent and connected to the ditch.

Samples from the wells were analyzed and showed normal levels of metals. Analysis of the same wells for organic chemicals were negative for two but the well at 101 Walnut Street adjacent to the pond showed low levels of chlordane, PCB's and alkylbenzenes.

Analysis of the pond water showed normal levels of metals with low levels of PCB's and aliphatic hydrocarbons which are petroleum products such as motor oil.

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Based on the initial samples the Agency moved to seal off the ditch between the roads. Fencing and signs warning the public were placed at each end of the ditch. On September 17 the Illinois Department of Transportation, District 8, began installing a snow fence along both sides of the ditch and around the pond, sealing off the contaminated area to unauthorized personnel. This installation involved 7,000 feet of fencing from DOT stocks and was under the supervision of Dale Klohr, the district engineer. Cost of the fence is estimated at \$7,500 and will be paid for by the Illinois Emergency Services and Disaster Agency from the Governor's Disaster Relief Fund. Tests taken by the Illinois Department of Public Health show no radioactivity in the area.

These actions complete the first phase of dealing with this situation aimed primarily at safeguarding the public's health and safety.

Phase two will concern itself with the long-term environmental impact of the contamination, its extent and assessment of the liability and responsibility for the situation.

Phase three will address the problem of cleanup and disposal.

At this time the Agency feels there is no threat from the ditch to the health and safety of the public. There are no vapors from the contamination unless the ground in the bed of the ditch is disturbed. These will be sampled later this week for laboratory analysis to determine their content.

With the public safety issue winding down the Emergency Response Unit will turn over future action by the Agency to the Division of Land Pollution Control as provided for in IEPA operating procedures. This division will develop a program to determine the extent of the pollution in the affected area as well as north and south of the area of immediate concern.

Its primary objective will be to establish the exact perimeter of the contamination by a sampling program that includes:

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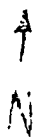
1. east and west of the ditch from Queeny Avenue to Judith Lane.
2. north and south of that area from Queeny to beyond the industrial complex and from Judith to the Mississippi River as well as both sides.
3. testing vegetation along both sides of Dead Creek along the area outlined plus take samples of crops in the immediate vicinity.
4. core sampling along the same route to determine the extent, if any, of groundwater contamination.

Land personnel will also pursue reports that a buried dump exists on a three-acre site 300 yards south of Sauget Village Hall in an area bounded by Queeny Avenue, Falling Springs Road and the northern boundary of the old Waggoner Trucking Company property.

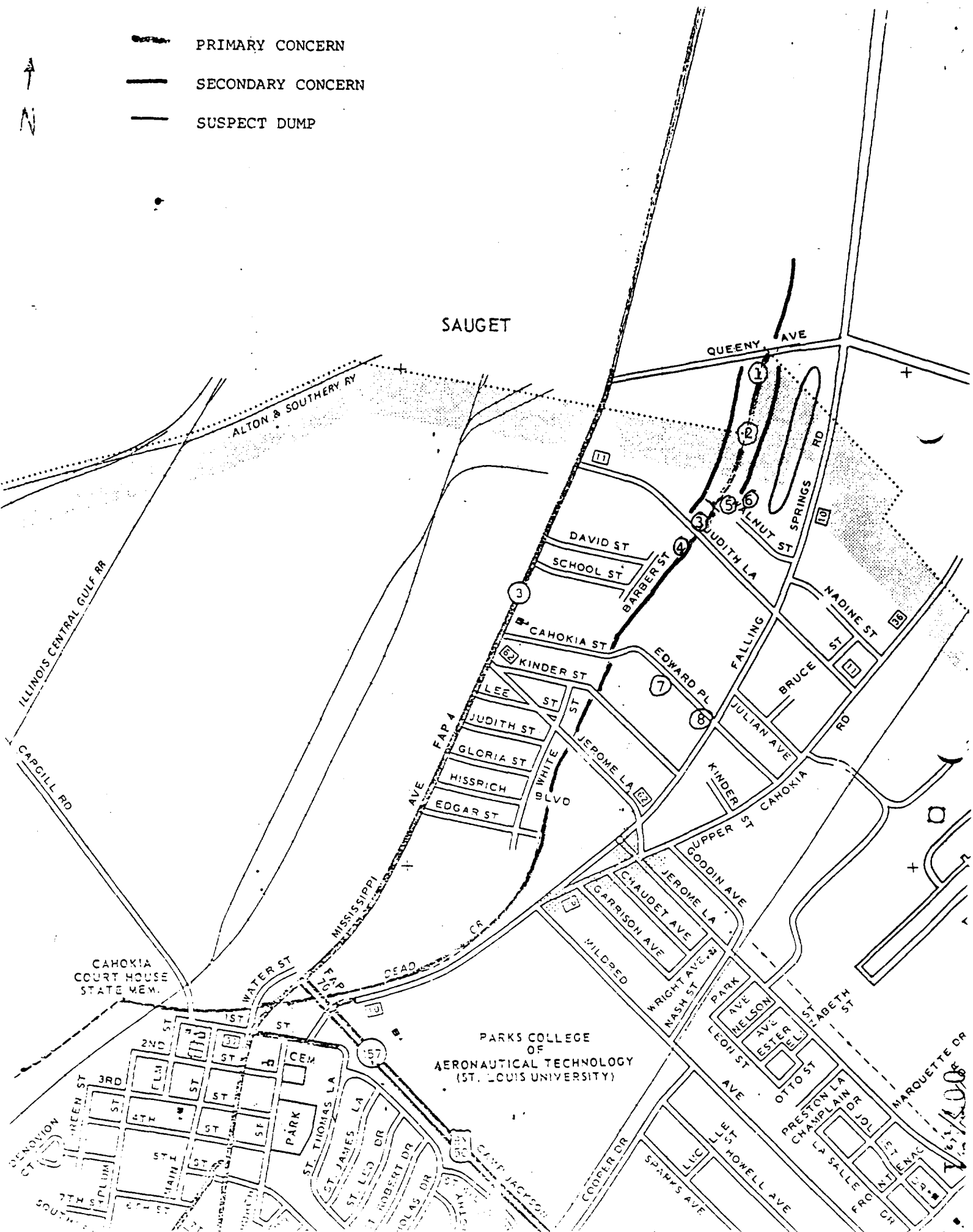
This phase of the Agency's actions will extend over a period of several months. Unfortunately there are no quick solutions to solving problems such as those that have been found here. It will take time for these actions as well as establishing who is responsible and liable for creating this situation.

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- PRIMARY CONCERN
- SECONDARY CONCERN
- SUSPECT DUMP



SAUGET



	BARIUM	COPPER	LEAD	NICKEL	PHOSPHO- ROUS	ZINC	PCB's	CHLOR- DANE	Alkyl- Benzenes	Aliph- atic H/C	TOLUENE	XYLENE	Chloro Benz- ene	Chloro Benz- ene	Nitro- Benz- ene	Ioro Phen
Soil Normals (PPM)	250	70	16	80	1180	132	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Location	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
1 Soil-North Ditch 50 yds. South of Queeny Ave.	1400	840	< 100	< 10	< 2000	260	1600 5200 17000	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	240	89	790	310	1260	500
2 Soil-Center Ditch Mid- way Between Queeny Ave. 2300 and Judith Ln.	13000	2000	1000	32100	19000	59	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.
3 Soil-South Ditch 40 yds. North of Judith Ln.	4800	32000	2400	3500	120000	25000	120	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.
4 Soil 25 yds. South of Judith Ln. (PPM)	690	7300	510	1150	15000	6200	120	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.
Surface Water Normals	< 5.0	< 0.02	< 0.1	< 1.0	< 1.0	< 1.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5 Water-Pond East of Ditch 0.4 (PPM)	0.32	< 0.05	< 0.05	0.9	0.7	4 PPB	N.D.	N.D.	60 PPB	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.
Drinking Water Normals	< 1.0	< 1.0	< 0.05	< 1.0	< 1.0	< 5.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6 Water-Well at 101 Walnut St.	0.2	0.03	< 0.02	< 0.005	< 1.0	1.5	13 PPB	14 PPB	< 10 PPB	N.D.	0	0	0	0	0	0
7 Water-Well at 113 Edward Pl.	0.4	< 0.005	< 0.05	< 0.01	< 1.0	0.2	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	0	0	0	0	0	0
8 Water-Well at 118 Edward Pl.	0.2	< 0.005	< 0.02	< 0.01	< 1.0	5.4	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	N.D.	0	0	0	0	0	0
Health Effects	Skin Effects & Resp- iratory Problems	Affects Kidneys, Skin, & Kidneys	Causes Anemia & Aff- ects Kidneys	Affects Skin & Respir- atory System	Affects Liver, Skin, Blood, Teeth.	General- ly of low Toxic- ity.	Affect Skin, Eyes, Liver.	Affects Skin, Kidneys, Liver.	Effect Lungs, Skin.	Essen- tially Non- Toxic	Affects Liver & Kidneys	Causes Liver & Kidney Diseases.	Affects Liver, Lungs, Skin	Affects Liver, Lungs, Skin.	Affects Liver, Lungs, Skin	Affe CNS Kidn

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	BARIUM	COPPER	LEAD	NICKEL	PHOSPHOROUS	ZINC	PCB's	CHLOR-DANE	Alkyl-Benzenes	Aliphatic H/C	TOLUENE	XYLENE	(D1) Chloro Benzene	(D1) Chloro Benzene	(D1) Chloro Benzene	(D1) Chloro Benzene
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Surface Water Normals	< 5.0	< 0.02	< 0.1	< 1.0	< 1.0	< 1.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
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Health Effects	Skin Effects & Respiratory Problems	Affects Kidneys, Skin, & Kidneys	Causes Anemia & Affects Respiratory System	Affects Skin & Respiratory System	Affects Liver, Skin, Blood, Teeth.	Generally of low Toxicity.	Affects Skin, Eyes, Liver.	Affects Skin, Kidneys, Liver.	Effect Lungs, Skin.	Essentially Non-Toxic	Affects Liver & Kidneys	Causes Liver & Kidney Diseases.	Affects Liver, Lungs, Skin	Affects Liver, Lungs, Skin	Affects Liver, Lungs, Skin	Affects CNS & Kidneys